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ABSTRACT

In spite of an increased effort to boost Latino parental participation in their children's education, barriers exist which inhibit them from forming partnerships with the schools. This paper describes the Mid-Atlantic Center, which provides technical assistance in areas of race, national origin, and gender to 6 states and 732 school districts in the Mid-Atlantic region. In spite of the differences found in the region, there are some challenges common to all states in the area. Trends relating to the issue of Latino parental involvement include: (1) the existence of several approaches to school-home collaboration with the prevalence of a traditional approach; (2) the existence of barriers that inhibit Latino parents' participation; (3) the existence of barriers as perceived by school personnel; and (4) the need for a mechanism to deal with tensions that may arise from active participation of Latino parents. One promising trend noted is that when Latino parents are reached, the response is overwhelmingly positive. Several recommendations for policy and practice decisions are presented, including moving beyond a piecemeal approach, training teachers to recognize the importance of parent participation, and providing training for parents to help their children succeed. (Contains 30 references and 7 tables.) (JDM)

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Overcoming Structural Barriers to Promote Latino Parental Involvement

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Overcoming Structural Barriers to Promote Latino Parental Involvement

Introduction

Parent involvement is consistently cited as an important correlate of effective schools. For nearly a quarter of a century, research on parental and family involvement has documented that parents can do much to reinforce positive attitudes toward school, to prepare their children for school, and to support their children's efforts once they are in school.

Unfortunately, not all parents have the same level of participation in school-home collaborations. In spite of an increase in efforts to boost Latino parental participation in the Mid-Atlantic region, which includes Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia, there is still a lack of systematic efforts to effectively include Latino families as school partners.

This paper provides an overview of the challenges and promising practices found in the Mid-Atlantic region regarding school-home partnerships with Latino parents. Particular attention has been paid to the positive outcomes found in selected school districts. These experiences provide evidence that when Latino families are properly included, their participation is overwhelmingly beneficial for the students, the parents, and the schools.

Educating Latino Students, an Outlook of the Mid-Atlantic Region

The Mid-Atlantic Center provides technical assistance in the areas of race, national origin and gender to the six states and 732 school districts that comprise the mid-Atlantic region. The states we serve represent a unique group of jurisdictions. Districts range from the highly rural --West Virginia-- to the highly urban --Washington DC -- and from the high per capita income of residents in Fairfax County, VA, and Montgomery County, MD, to the very low per capita income of West Virginia residents. The distribution of school districts in the region also has unique features. It includes jurisdictions with small numbers of school districts -- Delaware and Maryland -- and jurisdictions with more than five hundred districts — Pennsylvania (see Appendix, Table 1).

In spite of the differences found in the region, some emerging trends provide a common challenge and outlook to the overall region. What follows is a summary of these trends as they most closely relate to the issue of Latino parental involvement:

- **New demographic patterns**: As with the rest of the nation, the Mid-Atlantic region has experienced, in the last decade, a significant increase in the Latino child population. In all of the states in the region, the increases in the number of Latino children (who may be of any race) has been much higher than the increases in African American, White and Native American children (see Appendix, Table 2). The most significant changes in the number

of Latino children in the last decade were experienced by the District of Columbia (80.5 percent) and Virginia (78.1 percent).

- **Increase in the number of limited-English proficient students or English Language Learners**: The Mid-Atlantic region has experienced a tremendous influx of limited-English proficient (LEP) students in every jurisdiction. Analysis of the *U.S. General Accounting Office, School Age Demographics (1993)* data indicates that between 1980 and 1990 the number of LEP students has increased significantly. Two of the states in the region have more than doubled their LEP population -- West Virginia (103 percent) and Delaware (113.7 percent)-- while others have grown significantly (see Appendix, Table 3).

- **Latino students attend more predominantly segregated schools than other ethnic groups**: The proportion of Latino students attending segregated schools in the region has increased. According to the *Growth of Segregation in American Schools: Changing Patterns of Separation and Poverty since 1968 Report* (Orfield, 1993), Latino students are more likely than African Americans to be in predominantly "minority" schools. Although the region is home to both states that have one of the highest levels of segregation for Latinos in the country -- Pennsylvania --and one that rates as the most integrated -- Delaware--, Latino students continue to attend schools that are segregated (see Appendix, Table 4).

- **Latino students are more likely to experience school failure when compared to White students**: Latino and African American children in the mid-Atlantic region are far more likely to experience school failure than are White children. Analysis of desegregated data of the National Assessment of Educational Performance (NAEP), illustrate the large gap between the performance of White children and their Latino counterparts (see Appendix, Tables 5a & 5b).

There is little doubt that a disproportional large number of Latino students in the Mid-Atlantic region are not properly equipped to succeed in a global, competitive society. Given that their numbers are increasing significantly, attention must be focused on the regional and national implications of this issue.

In the past, we have dealt with minority populations as separate and marginal pieces of the greater picture. Categorical funding and categorical services were therefore seen as a solution. They were designed to prepare culturally diverse populations to enter the main stream of educational programs. Therefore for the last twenty years, issues of access to services were pursued as a priority. Little attention was given to the specific needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students within the mainstream itself.

With the advent of systemic reform, categorical services have been declared a failure and attention has been given to improving the entire educational delivery system through whole school reform. Once again little attention is being given to diversity within the context of reforming mainstream

programs. This is clearly problematic for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is that culturally diverse students, taken together, are rapidly becoming what the National Coalition of Educational Equity Advocates (1994) has labeled "the new mainstream."

The myth that culturally diverse students will succeed if given the same opportunities as other students, has been disproved by the continually poor results of this approach. Mainstream programs, to be successful with a wide diversity of students, must be designed with the flexibility necessary to support a wide variety of needs. While we all should be expected to meet the same high standards, how we get there can and does vary considerably.

We need to rethink ways to address this challenge drawing upon what we know works and modifying it when necessary to meet the needs of culturally diverse students. To do this, we need to look at the many indicators and factors that have an impact on student achievement. Among these factors is parental involvement. Numerous research studies show the positive impact of home-school partnerships and parental involvement on student achievement. There is no doubt that when parents become involved with the education of their children, students not only become more motivated to achieve but actually achieve significantly better (Epstein 1991; Griffith, Wade, & Loeb, 1997; Shaefer, 1972; Walberg, 1984).

The Imperative Need to Involve Latino Parents

There is evidence that family practices concerning children's education are more important for helping students succeed in school, and in general, than are family structure, economic status, or characteristics such as race, parent education, family size, and age of child. According to these studies, children tend to do well in school when their parents express high expectations for school achievement; stress the value of schooling; conduct warm, nurturing and frequent interactions with their children; and encourage a purposeful use of time and space (Chavkin, 1989; Clark, 1983; Schiamberg & Chun, 1986).

In a longitudinal study of seven Chicano families in Southern California, Villanueva (1996) found that Latino families were able to provide support and have an impact in their children's education in spite of a lack of formal schooling, limited knowledge of English, and lack of skills to help their children with homework. She found that despite these limitations, families motivated their children to do well in school by providing them with cultural practices that fostered a positive attitude towards work and responsibility and the importance of education.

The following additional benefits are found in the research of parental involvement and parents of diverse backgrounds:

- increased language achievement, (Bermudez & Padron, 1989; Henderson & Garcia, 1973);
- improved overall school behavior (Levenstein, 1974; Weikhart, 1973);
- improved parent-child relationships (Henderson, 1988);
- improved home-school relationships (Bermudez & Padron, 1987, 1988; Oakes, 1990;

Herman & Yeh, 1980); and

- decreased drop out rates (Delgado-Gaitan, 1990; Nuñez, 1994).

Additionally, it has been documented that meaningful parent participation results in benefits to parents and children that extend beyond the individual school. Parents who participate in joint efforts with schools, develop increased self confidence, have more positive attitudes towards schools and staff, help gather support in the community for their schools, and enroll in other educational programs (Becher, 1984; Chavkin, 1989; Cummins, 1986).

Latino Parent Involvement in the Mid-Atlantic Region: Barriers, Challenges and Trends

In spite of the reported benefits to parental participation, schools in the Mid-Atlantic region have not yet managed to ensure the effective participation of Latino parents in a systematic way. While it is certainly true that several school districts and individual schools in the region (i.e., Arlington County and Montgomery County) are involved in concerted efforts to include Latino parents in many different ways, the region as a whole still lacks an active and strong presence of the Latino community and parents.

A large percentage of Latino students in the mid-Atlantic region attend schools whose values, culture and language are different from their own. These students and their families have had little or no exposure to the norms and expectations assumed by the school. In addition to cultural discontinuities, Latino parents are frequently perceived as lacking the skills, the interest and the capability to seriously become involved in any systematic effort to educate their children.

Schools often assign blame to parents for a lack of Latino parental involvement rather than considering that the school structure itself may act as a barrier. In our work as technical assistance providers we are usually asked to respond to the following questions: "Why won't Latino parents participate?" and "How can we get them to participate?"

In the last three years, the Center has been involved in a number of technical assistance projects that focused on assisting schools and Latino parents to collaborate. In working with several school districts and groups of parents, we were able to identify, document and assess needs, critical issues and promising practices. In addition to our direct involvement in specific projects, our analysis is based on the following: a) focus groups with parents, teachers and administrators; b) state and district meetings with key educational leaders; c) interviews with school and district professionals; d) survey data in selected schools; and e) reports and documents, including state and school district published annual reports, written documentation and descriptions of current programs and practices aimed at addressing parental involvement needs, and professional publications which highlighted parental involvement issues in the states, districts and schools in the mid-Atlantic region.

What follows is a summary of the overall characteristics, trends and highlights of Latino parental involvement efforts in the region.

1. **The existence of several approaches to school-home collaboration with prevalence of traditional approaches.**

Epstein (1990) and Ochoa (in press), among other researchers and practitioners, have emphasized the importance of developing partnerships between families and schools. To be successful, these partnerships need to view each other as equal partners and jointly develop plans that will enable parents and schools to work together. Ochoa states:

A bridge must be built to link the home and the school for Latino students. The bridge, however, must have footings solidly on each bank if it is to be secure. It must be built consciously and cooperatively by parents and educators who share understanding, concerns, goals, and expectations of and for the children who are their joint responsibility (Ochoa, in press).

A range of parent involvement activities are present in the mid-Atlantic region. The three most common approaches include:

<u>*School-to-home transmission approach*</u>: Many schools and school districts in the mid-Atlantic region continue to focus their efforts on what Swap (1990) calls the *school-to-home transmission approach*. This approach is based on two premises: that continuity of expectations, values and attitudes between home and school encourage achievement, and that school personnel should identify the values and practices that form the basis for school success. Parents are expected to emphasize the importance of schooling to their children and to see that they meet minimum academic and behavior standards. School personnel also hope that parents will transfer to their children what has come to be known as "cultural capital," that is, ways of being associated with the cultural mainstream. If parents are not part of this mainstream, it is hoped that gradually they will be able to respond and assimilate to the school's effort to transmit this cultural capital.

This approach, in addition to not allowing equal partnerships, places emphasis on schools and teachers directing parents rather than collaborating with them and inhibits students and parents from expressing their cultural backgrounds. While this approach may be effective with parents who share the same cultural values as those of the school; it can "disempower" culturally and linguistically diverse groups of parents. This approach supports the "deficit model" approach, which holds that parents of certain social classes, ethnic or cultural backgrounds need to compensate for a "deficit" before they will or can be effectively involved with schools.

Although this approach appears not to be the most common in the mid-Atlantic region, we still find several schools working under this paradigm. We are pleased to report that the interactive and partnership approaches are gradually replacing this approach.

<u>*The interactive approach*</u>: Moving towards a partnership model, many schools in the

region actively attempt to reach diverse groups of parents and encourage parents to jointly develop collaborative activities. While the school may initiate and have some control over the activities, parents of diverse background are encouraged to have a role in decision making and in the design and implementation of activities. We have found, in many of these initiatives, that when appropriately reached, Latino parents tend to respond positively. However, it is common to find that their most active level of participation tends to concentrate more in what is called "traditional" ways of involvement (supporting schools in field trips, sharing aspects of their cultures in school events). Their level of participation in the areas of decision making, including participation in PTA meetings and school committees, continues to be consistently low, and lower than that which is experienced by White parents (Basterra, 1996; Griffith et al., 1997).

Partnership for school success: Some school districts and schools in the region are moving towards an approach that Swap (1990) calls *Partnership for School Success*. This approach sees parents of all cultural and linguistic backgrounds as equal partners in the task of providing support to the students they serve. It emphasizes a two-way communication approach between school and families and actively includes all parents in the conceptualization, design and development of activities. This approach also encourages participation of culturally and linguistically diverse parents at all levels, particularly at the decision making and policy levels.

Overall, what we have most commonly observed in our work in the region is a combination of the *school-to-home transmission* and the *interactive* approaches. Although *partnerships for school success* approaches are increasing in the region; they continue to be the least common.

2. Existence of barriers that inhibit Latino parents' participation

Linguistically and culturally diverse parents face barriers that make their interactions with schools particularly challenging. Through parent interviews and focus groups conducted during the last three years, we found that language minority parents in general, and Latino parents in particular, are faced with several barriers. These barriers include: 1) work interference; 2) lack of confidence interacting in a culture different than their own; 3) lack of English language skills; 4) insufficient information on home-school collaboration and/or partnerships; 5) different expectations of the school role; and 6) in some cases, lack of sensitivity and understanding on the part of the school personnel. Although these barriers might affect parents differently according to parents' personal backgrounds and characteristics, (socio-economic status; educational level; ethnic background; country of origin; knowledge of English language and level of understanding of the U.S. school system and specific types of schools), they continue to be commonly attributed barriers to the involvement of Latino parents (Basterra, 1996).

One of the areas that deserves special attention, at least in our region, is the area related to Latino parents' perceptions of the school's role in general and the home-school partnership in particular. Parents from diverse cultural and linguistic background usually have different expectations of the roles that the schools and parents should play in their children's education. In many cases, Latino parents are not aware of what they can and should expect from the schools. It is also not uncommon to find Latino parents who feel at a disadvantage because of their limited English, or their lack of knowledge of how the schools operate. As a Center, we are frequently asked by both parents and schools alike to provide training on the rights and responsibilities of parents and to assist them to understand the nature and role of American schools.

Results of a needs assessment, conducted in a school in Maryland (Basterra, 1996), indicate that Latino parents are interested in having more information about their role in supporting the school's efforts. They expressed an interest in receiving training on parenting skills, helping their children with homework and other related areas of parental involvement. They also wanted to receive training on more effective ways to interact with the school.

As important as it is to provide training to school personnel, it is equally important to provide training to parents. These training programs must be designed to address the specific needs of both school personnel and the parents with the goal of establishing dialogue and achieving a collaboration between the school and home that focuses both on improving the achievement of an individual child and creating flexible educational structures that effectively serve the needs of the language minority student.

3. Existing barriers perceived by school personnel

Since successful partnerships between schools and communities require providing tools to both school staff and parents, attention must be paid to the barriers that are closely related to involving culturally and linguistically diverse parents.

Latino parents and other minority parents, are many times blamed (consciously and unconsciously) by teachers, administrators, and mainstream parents for their children's failure to succeed in school. In addition, teachers and administrators have cited the following barriers to effective communication with parents: 1) the fear and distrust of different life styles; 2) the lack of an understanding of the home language: 3) endorsement of negative stereotypes (e.g. parental apathy); and 4) the lack of formal training in dealing with culturally and linguistically diverse parents.

Demographic changes experienced in the region have not resulted in increased availability of training. School systems for the most part have not required their personnel to learn how to successfully interact with culturally and linguistically diverse communities. In many cases teachers do not know how to relate to cultural differences; in other cases a

biased perception of low-income, linguistically diverse parents prevents principals and teachers from establishing an effective understanding and inclusion of their new constituencies.

The National Origin program, at the Mid Atlantic Center, has provided technical assistance and training to numerous schools in the region on issues of cross-cultural communication; developing knowledge and understanding of the different cultures represented in the school; and strategies to promote a two-way communication process with parents of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Mid-Atlantic Center, 1997, 1998). This assistance, while greatly needed and usually well received, is important, but not sufficient. Policies and practices need to focus on systemic efforts that integrate this training as part of the requirements to teach at all levels and not be the result on the interest of individual school and/or school districts.

4. **Need for mechanisms to effectively deal with tensions that may arise from the active participation of Latino parents**

Tensions between parents and schools are to be expected in many different stages of forging partnerships (Ochoa, in press). Tensions may actually occur as a result of empowering initiatives of the school designed to promote equal partnerships. It is important that schools prepare themselves to approach these tensions as a positive step that will allow a better dialogue between school and homes.

In our work in the mid-Atlantic region we have witnessed instances when, as a result of their involvement and a better understanding of issues related to the academic achievement of their children, Latino parents raised concerns and expectations. Although on some occasions the parents were able to settle their differences with the schools, on many other occasions, the schools were not able to frame the discussion and the process in equal terms. In some cases this resulted in Latino parents being perceived by school administrators as trying to defy the statu quo; making unreasonable demands; and/or moving beyond the parameters established for parental involvement . This can leave both the schools and the parents in a very precarious situation. Latino parents feel a sense of disappointment and defeat. Schools start questioning their parental involvement activities and finding ways to avoid similar situations in the future.

According to Ochoa (in press), in many cases tensions are part and a sign of "growth" in developing partnerships between parents and schools. If school systems are serious in their attempts to develop true partnerships with diverse groups of parents, they need to find a process by which these tensions are worked out. Fortunately, there are ways of doing this. Ochoa's work in several school systems in California provides a framework to address these tensions in a productive way for both schools and parents. Using a model that empowers both the schools and the parents, he enables participants to gain from the tensions and use them as tools to improve dialogue and strengthen partnerships.

5. **Promising Trends: When Latino parents are reached, the response is overwhelmingly positive.**

School-home experiences in both Arlington County Schools in Virginia and Montgomery County Schools in Maryland, show that when Latino parents are reached, they respond in very positive ways.

In 1997, Montgomery County Public Schools conducted an evaluation of family -school partnerships initiatives in sixteen elementary schools in Montgomery County (Griffith et al., 1997). The main purpose of the study was to determine how well family-school partnerships were implemented in the participating schools and to assess how well these initiatives have accomplished their goals. Partnership activities were conducted under a four-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education through Family Works, a collaboration between Child Care Connection -- the child care resource and referral agency for Montgomery County-- and Montgomery County Public Schools.

One of the questions of the study was to find out if parents targeted for parent involvement actually reported greater familiarity and use of the school-family partnership initiatives. The target populations included parents having children enrolled in lower grade levels and parents of African American and Latino racial/ethnic identification. The primary data sources for this study were survey questionnaires that included items that addressed Epstein's six levels of parental involvement. Results indicate that in spite of the fact that Latino and African American parents were generally less likely than other parents to have experienced family-school partnerships, when they did experience a partnership, their response was overwhelmingly positive. Specifically, findings indicate that when reached, the effect of the family-school partnership on both parent involvement and student achievement was greater for African American and Latino parent and students than for Asian American and White parents and students.

Furthermore, Latino parents reported significant changes in their parent involvement activities from the previous to the current year. In fact, they reported the largest increases in attending activities to help with their children's school work and to know what their children were being taught, as well as helping in their children's classrooms and attending PTA meetings (see Appendix, Table 6).

Finally, results of the evaluation also indicate that parent involvement activities had a greater effect on Latino families (10 percent of the variance) than it had on Asian Americans (5 percent) and Whites (4 percent).

Results from Arlington County Public Schools partnership activities (Violand-Sanchez, Briceño, & Bratt, in press) also indicate that when appropriately reached, Latino parents are not only pleased to participate but also willing to take part and be responsible for assisting and/or taking the leadership to participate in a variety of activities, including

advocacy and policy-making related activities. Barrett Elementary School serves as an example of promising partnerships in Arlington County. Through "Project Interaction," the school has managed to develop not only a cohesive family program but also to promote the involvement of all families in general, and of Latino parents in particular. With support from the leadership and the active participation and commitment of the Family Program Coordinator, the school has been able to make significant gains in their efforts to develop an inclusive and effective model for parent involvement. Among its many successes is the creation of Comite Latino (Latino Committee), a committee of Latino parents which is part of the PTA. The committee, which initiated its activities in 1997, has charged itself with the following objectives: 1) to promote a union among Barrett families; 2) to promote greater involvement of the Latino community; 3) to work collaboratively; 4) to increase communication between the staff and Latino families; and 5) to support the school in general.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Mid-Atlantic Center has witnessed a significant growth in the area of Latino parent involvement. Promising trends, as well as changes in attitudes and perception of both schools and Latino parents, are beginning to emerge. We believe that these are all positive changes. As a region however, we still need to devote time and effort to promote and develop systemic and effective school-home partnerships between schools and culturally and linguistically diverse communities. What follows is a list of recommended policies and practices.

- Move beyond a piece meal approach. States in the region need to develop policies that encourage and enable school districts and schools to promote successful school-home partnerships that are responsive to the diverse populations they serve.

- Train teachers at the undergraduate and graduate levels to recognize the importance of parental participation and to gain cross-cultural skills needed to make this partnership work. Principals and teachers need to develop knowledge and appreciation of their students' cultures. They also need to learn how to establish a continuous communication process with the families so that parental involvement at different levels can be achieved.

- Provide training to Latino parents on how to best use their talents to help their children succeed in schools. We also need to provide them training on how to develop additional skills to improve their communication and effectiveness with their children and with their schools.

- Finally, efforts should focus on moving from more traditional parental involvement activities to establishing true partnerships in which both school personnel and parents learn from each other and find ways in which they can mutually support their efforts of educating children.

APPENDIX

TABLE 1

Number of School Districts By State in Region III

STATE	NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS
Delaware	15
District of Columbia	1
Maryland	24
Pennsylvania	501
Virginia	136
West Virginia	55
Total	**732**

TABLE 2

Percent Change in Child Population in Region III States, 1980-1990

	Non-Hispanic White	Non-Hispanic African American	Non-Hispanic Asian/Pacific Islander	Non-Hispanic Native American	Hispanic
Delaware	-4.6	0	70.7	6.3	31.3
District of Columbia	-5.4	-24	48.6	-22.6	80.5
Maryland	-6.6	5.2	79.5	37.6	67.8
Pennsylvania	-12.7	-7	90.9	30.7	33
Virginia	-2	3	99.9	44.1	78.1
West Virginia	-20.7	-20.3	31.5	81.3	-40.1

Source: Center for Study of Social Policy, *The Challenge of Change*, 1992

TABLE 3

Change in LEP Populations in Region III States: 1980-1990

	LEP Children		Change, 1980-1990	
	1980	1990	Number	Percent
U.S. Total	1,838,657	2,388,243	549,586	29.9
Region Total	66,936	104,903	37,967	56.7
Delaware	1,732	2,765	1,033	59.6
District of Columbia	1,867	3,989	2,122	113.7
Maryland	13,523	21,879	8,356	61.8
Pennsylvania	39,295	49,787	10,492	26.7
Virginia	12,596	23,668	11,072	87.9
West Virginia	1,387	2,815	1,428	103

Source: U.S. General Accounting Office, *School-Age Demographics: Recent Trends Pose New Educational Challenges,* 1993

TABLE 4

Exposure of Blacks, Latinos and Whites to Students of Each Group, by State, in Region III, 1991-1992

	Percent Minorities in School of Typical White *	
	Blacks	Latinos
Delaware	26.6	2.8
District of Columbia	37.9	10.7
Maryland	16	2
Pennsylvania	5	1.5
Virginia	**	**
West Virginia	3.2	0.2
*Typical White indicates schools where the majority of children are White		
** State not reporting data		

Source: Gary Orfield, "Growth of Segregation in American Schools: Changing Patterns of Separation and Poverty Since 1968 Report", 1993

TABLE 5A

Percentage of Fourth Grade Students Below Basic Reading Achievement Levels in Region III States

	All	White	African American	Latino	All Males	All Females
National	42	31	70	67	47	36
Delaware	47	38	67	66	54	41
DC	Not available					
Maryland	45	31	69	61	49	40
Pennsylvania	39	30	74	65	43	35
Virginia	43	30	69	51	48	37
West Virginia	42	41	56	61	47	37

Source: *The 1994 NAEP Trial Reading State Assessment*, National Center for Education Statistics

TABLE 5B

Percentage of Fourth Grade Students Below Basic Math Achievement Levels in Region III States

	All	White	African American	Latino	All Males	All Females
National	38	26	68	60	37	39
Delaware	47	32	72	72	46	47
DC	81	23	84	82	82	79
Maryland	42	23	70	57	41	42
Pennsylvania	32	23	73	61	31	32
Virginia	38	27	66	48	36	40
West Virginia	37	34	64	53	36	38

Source: *The NAEP 1996 State Assessment in Mathematics*, National Center for Education Statistics

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TABLE 6

Change in Parent Involvement Activities from Last Year to Current Year, by Race/Ethnic Identification

RACE/ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION					
PARENT INVOLVEMENT	African Amer.	Asian Amer.	Hispanic	White	Total
Change in percent					
Attended school activities, events					
Attended activities on how to help with school work	+16	+21	+27	+9	+14
Attended activities about what is being taught	+33	+31	+39	+27	+30
Related to volunteer activities					
Helped in child's school or class	+11	+15	+26	+134	+14
Went on school field trips	+7	+3	+10	-2	+2
Attended open house	+39	+39	+42	+36	+38
Volunteered for school events	+12	+10	+19	+17	+16
Attended PTA meetings	+9	+12	+21	+7	+10
Served on school committee	+0	-1	+7	+6	+4
Related to helping child with school work					
Helped child with homework	+58	+56	+59	+39	+48
Checked that child did homework	+57	+60	+59	+40	+48
Read to child or listened to child read	+55	+57	+57	+37	+46
Talked to child about school	+61	+57	+57	+40	+49
Took child to library, museum, zoo, etc.	+51	+56	+51	+37	+44
Related to other activities					
Spoke to students about specific subject	+2	+13	+4	+2	+3
Helped make school decisions	+3	+8	+10	+3	+5
Column N[a] Overall Effect (Eta squared)	375	152	207	837	1575

[a] Column totals do not include respondents who had no children in the school last year

Source: J. Griffith, J. Wade, and C. Loeb. *An Evaluation of Family-School Partnership Initiatives in Sixteen Elementary Schools.* Montgomery County Public Schools, 1997

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